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Review of Richard Noyce's Book (2010) Critical Mass. Printmaking beyond the Edge. London: A & C Black Publishers

Citation for published version:

Pelzer-Montada, R 2011, 'Review of Richard Noyce's Book (2010) Critical Mass. Printmaking beyond the Edge. London: A & C Black Publishers' *Printmaking Today*.

Link:

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

Document Version:

Peer reviewed version

Published In:

Printmaking Today

Publisher Rights Statement:

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Review for **Printmaking Today**

Richard Noyce (2010) **Critical Mass. Printmaking beyond the Edge**. London: A & C Black Publishers

By Ruth Pelzer-Montada

The true merit of Richard Noyce's first book, published in 2006, was to bring to our attention print artists who were, at the time, not well known in the largely Western, English-speaking world. In this respect, his project was and remains a dissipation of the still existing boundaries between certain self-appointed 'centres' of art and the shifting 'peripheries'. He has followed this earlier introduction to printmakers chiefly from Eastern Europe and the East with a wider selection of artists from a global spectrum including Latin America and South Africa.

The title of Noyce's new book is testament to his belief that printmaking not only continually re-invents itself but is fast becoming a major force in the arts. Whether one shares Noyce's optimism or not, one could not wish for a more spirited and informed travel guide into the expanded landscape of international printmaking.

An introductory chapter presents printmaking in the wider socio-political and global art context. The next section outlines, under well-chosen headings, such as topical concerns and physical print formats, the themes by which artists may be grouped. These headings re-appear, if relevant, as keywords or 'tags', in the entries on individual artists. This allows readers to identify shared interests and common creative practices amongst otherwise diverse individuals.

Handsomely produced and written with verve and intelligence, the book would benefit from a larger bibliographical apparatus of text sources which readers could consult to develop their own understanding and expertise. This would underline the critical, democratic nature of print culture as well as the intellectual transparency which the book rightly promotes.